April 1, 1917	2,181*
July 1, 1917	3,001
October 1, 1917	3,763
January 1, 1918	4,407

Quite a considerable number of howitzers were also made available for the equipment of the larger steamers. Thus within a year the number of vessels armed was more than trebled and the power of the armament provided was considerably increased. This process gave the convoys greater security by increasing the risks the submarine had to take in its attacks on our shipping.

* From this date many of the guns were of a heavier type in order to cope with the more powerful ones with which the great cruiser submarines were equipped. Several vessels already armed had to be re-armed for this reason.